

PERSONAL USE FISHING

Emergency Order

ALASKA DEPARTMENT
OF FISH & GAME

Under Authority of AS 16.05.060

Emergency Order No. 3-RS-03-12

Issued at: Glennallen, Tuesday, June 12, 2012

Effective Date: 12:01 a.m. Monday, June 18, 2012

Expiration Date: 11:59 p.m. August 31, 2012, unless superseded by subsequent emergency order.

EXPLANATION:

This emergency order amends the schedule for the personal use dip net salmon fishery in the Chitina Subdistrict of the Upper Copper River for the period June 18 – June 24, 2012. The Chitina Subdistrict will be open from 12:01 a.m. Monday, June 18 until 11:59 p.m. Sunday, June 24.

In addition, this emergency order **closes the Chitina Subdistrict Personal Use Dip Net Salmon Fishery to the retention of king salmon** for the remainder of the 2012 season. King salmon incidentally taken may not be retained and must be released immediately and returned to the water unharmed.

REGULATION:

Consistent with the COPPER RIVER PERSONAL USE DIP NET SALMON FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN, 5 AAC 77.591, the personal use dip net salmon fishery in the Chitina Subdistrict of the Upper Copper River District will be open from 12:01 a.m. Monday, June 18 through 11:59 p.m. Sunday, June 24. In addition, the retention of king salmon is prohibited for conservation reasons to achieve the Copper River king salmon escapement goal.

Cora Campbell
Commissioner

by delegation to: _____
Mark A. Somerville
Area Management Biologist

JUSTIFICATION:

During June 4 – June 10, there were 87,641 salmon counted past the Miles Lake sonar. The preseason projection for this period was 103,775 salmon, which results in a deficit of 16,134 salmon. Copper River sockeye salmon migratory timing and the previous five-year average harvest and participation rates indicate sufficient numbers of salmon available to maintain 168 hours of fishing time during the week of June 18 – June 24.

A total of approximately 9,363 king salmon have been harvested within the Copper River District commercial gillnet fishery as of June 7. This is less than half of the last 10-year average of 21,081 king salmon and 3,090 fish below the recent 5-year average of 12,453 king salmon. Through June

10, no king salmon have passed the Gulkana River counting tower. Cumulative counts from 2002 – 2011, through June 10, have averaged 35 king salmon with only 4 out of 10 years observing zero king salmon past the tower by this date.

In addition, cumulative catch rates through June 10 in the Native Village of Eyak sampling fish wheels are the lowest for this date since 2004. Copper River king salmon migratory timing and five year average harvest rates indicate insufficient numbers of king salmon to sustain a king salmon fishery in the Chitina Subdistrict and still attain a spawning escapement of 24,000 or more king salmon in the Copper River drainage.

DISTRIBUTION:

The distribution list for this emergency order is on file at the Region III Office of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Sport Fish, 1300 College Road, Fairbanks, AK 99701, (907) 459-7357 and the Glennallen Area Office of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Sport Fish, PO Box 47, Glennallen, AK 99588, (907) 822-3309.